

# S

The Shakerite

## **ALL-OUT CLASS WARFARE IN THE RAIDER NATION**

**SEE PAGES 8-9 TO FIND OUT  
HOW CLASSES ARE COMPETING  
TO BE THE BEST**





Alateen is a support group for teens who have been affected by someone else's drinking. It is free and confidential and allows participants to share experiences and encouragement. Alateen meets at the Shaker Main Library every Thursday at 4:30 p.m. Any questions can be referred to social worker Chris Ruma-Cullen, who can be found in Room 13.



# THE FUTURE OF SHAKER DANCES

## Even with the drama surrounding intoxication at Homecoming, administration resists change

BY ALLIE HARRIS AND JULIA SCHARFSTEIN  
CAMPUS AND CITY EDITORS

"What that really means is we don't think we are capable of holding a safe event. If this decision came to be, then I would just cancel the dance altogether," Principal Michael Griffith said.

And with that, Griffith ruled out Breathalyzing as a tool to curb student drinking before school socials.

The future of dances is in question after three students were apprehended by school officials and faced consequences for drunkenness at the Oct. 15 Homecoming dance. This incident was the most recent and, along with past incidents, raises concerns about how to address the problem.

Breathalyzing has become a solution many schools in the area have adopted to stem drinking at school events. Among these is Chagrin Falls, where the student handbook explains the procedure used for any school events. It states, "Students suspected of having used alcohol may be required to submit to a Breathalyzer test. If the student refuses to take the Breathalyzer test it will be automatically assumed they have used alcohol and will be subject to school consequences."

Griffith, however, struggles with the use of the test. "Even if we were to reason that . . . 100 plus students came to the dance drunk, that means that 800-900 students didn't," he said. He explained that Breathalyzing would force the majority of students to prove that they had not consumed alcohol. "To me, that is wrong," Griffith said.

Although Griffith believes alcohol use is not a big enough problem to start Breathalyzing, he did say that a rule was instated several years ago that requires kids to show up to the Homecoming dance before 9 p.m. The policy was designed to limit the time students could spend drinking before arriving at the dance.

Social worker Chris Ruma-Cullen, who heads an Alateen chapter, thinks differently about Breathalyzing. "I would definitely be in support of Breathalyzing because it is one tool we can use that can help minimize drinking. Although it won't stop everything, it will stop the vast

majority," she said.

Ruma-Cullen also noted parents' responsibilities in stopping underage alcohol abuse. "Messages parents give their kids are the most important because kids listen to them the most," she said.

Logan Davis, head of Student Council social committee, said that future dances are a subject of conversation in council. Davis explained that Breathalyzing is still seen as unnecessary. She said that administration knows that some kids drink before Homecoming "but will choose to ignore it unless it becomes a problem," Davis said.

According to Griffith, it is unclear if and what changes will be made to future dances. We "need to evaluate whether or not we can hold an event that is safe, positive and free from those kinds of behaviors" Griffith said. There have been no decisions made yet about future dances, but Griffith said that "what we are doing currently is not working." The administration is considering other approaches to limit drinking.

Sophomore Natasha Simske said breath tests are fair. "If you're going to drink, it should be in the privacy of your own home," she said.

Carloine Weingart, parent of sophomore Lizzie Weingart, is not sure Breathalyzer tests would help. "I know many schools in our area do [Breathalyze], but I'm not sure it cuts down on the teen drinking," she said. "At those schools, the kids just binge afterwards. Maybe it's time to have some serious discussions about it."

Davis explained that she has been working on getting a second dance for a couple months. The proposal was restructured so it would appeal to the administration. She said the winter dance needed to be more formal because "a classier presentation leads to classier behavior."

"The school is hesitant to sponsor an event for kids to get drunk and dance dirty," Davis said.

Davis confirmed that nothing has been decided about dances in the immediate future. As for the winter formal, "because it's on the calendar, it's pretty permanent, but I'm more worried about it being taken off in the future."



Shala Miller-Gristmill

STUDENTS' ROWDY BEHAVIOR at Homecoming was apparent in their dancing. A student is crowd surfing, which occurred several times before supervisors told them to stop. Administration was also disappointed with the fact that some students made poor decisions and came to the dance intoxicated. Although Griffith said, "I'm disappointed in the students that made the choice to come to dances under the influence because it causes harm," he also said that the events of Homecoming were a "mixed bag." He said, "I was ecstatic to see the number of students that came to participate."

# DON'T DRINK AND DRIVE! CALL CABBIE D FOR A RIDE

BY ALLIE HARRIS AND JULIA SCHARFSTEIN  
CAMPUS AND CITY EDITORS

The proprietor of Cabbie D, a party bus service students booked for this Homecoming and previous proms, insists that minors are forbidden to consume alcohol while on the Cabbie D bus.

In a phone interview, the bus driver, David Edwards said, "I don't allow minors to drink [so] I've never had a problem . . . It's on their parents to make sure they don't have alcohol," he said. "If they're intoxicated when they get on, it's not our problem."

"The Shaker students went from one house to another house, so if they were intoxicated, it happened at one of those houses... they didn't bring alcohol on the bus," Edwards said.

Principal Michael Griffith confirmed that there was "a problem" with this bus company at this year's homecoming. He also confirmed that there was an issue with the same company at last year's prom, although he was not aware which company it was until the Homecoming incident this year.

People who want to book the bus for an event must be over the age of 18. In the rules and regulations located on the Cabbie D website, it states, "All unruly passengers will be ejected from the premises... You as the booking party will be responsible for your guest on the party bus.... All alcoholic beverages will be provided by you."

The website logo reads "Cabbie D" in shining gold letters with an animated woman dancing next to it. A slideshow is featured with pictures of teenagers and adults on the bus, some of the photos containing alcohol.

Another page background is bright pink with cartoon pictures of martini glasses.

Throughout the website, there are many various videos on display, including a football player's victory dance and clips from music videos.

Despite recent rumors about Edwards' jailing, in a phone interview, he discredited the claim.



Cabbied.net

THIS SCREEN SHOT of the Cabbie D website includes an animated dancing woman and a photo slideshow of customers on the buses. Another page at the site features a background of martini glasses.



# SB5 GONE, FEARS REMAIN

SB5 is dead, but teachers worry that similar legislation is on the way

BY SARAH-JANE LORENZO  
CAMPUS AND CITY EDITOR

Senate Bill 5, a bill that would restrict union rights and affect public employees, met firm defeat at polls across Ohio on Tuesday, Nov. 8. Although the bill itself will never take effect, it leaves many teachers with the concern that their profession will be profoundly changed nevertheless.



TIM KALAN

"I would say that I feel threatened," said Tim Kalan, an art teacher at Onaway and Lomond. "What I see is a pattern of treating education in a certain way, and I worry that things like Senate Bill 5 weaken public institutions."

Kalan has been teaching art classes at Shaker for four years, and like many other teachers he believes that legislation similar to Senate Bill 5 is lurking somewhere not too far down the road.

"I love my job now, and would still love it if SB5 would have passed," Kalan said. "The problem is how legislation like that presents obstacles to the delivery of a good education."

John Morris, an English teacher at the High School, feels that Senate Bill 5 was one of many bills that will present an attack on teachers. "I think it's indicative of an environment and an administration that is trying to destabilize Ohio's education," said Morris, the Shaker Heights Teachers' Association president.



JOHN MORRIS

Although Senate Bill 5 is dead, students may still face more standardized tests with the introduction of value-added evaluation. Enforced by the Ohio Department of Education, value-added measures will evaluate teachers based upon their student's achievement. Teachers' performance will be made public and easily accessible.

"The only problem is with value-added evaluation it's



Liz Jacob•The Shakerite

SHAKER STUDENTS CANVASSED on Election Day Nov. 8 for We Are Ohio, the campaign to encourage voters to vote no on Issue 2. Issue 2 failed by a 61 to 39 percent vote.

**"I love my job now, and would still love it if SB5 would have passed. The problem is how legislation like that presents obstacles to the delivery of a good education."**

Lomond teacher Tim Kalan

very hard to establish a baseline of where we're getting our kids to," Morris said. Ohio is adopting value-added evaluation because it accepted federal money for education through President Obama's race to the top program.

Christine McBurney, chairwoman of the theatre arts department, said value-added evaluation of teachers is really about more than teacher ratings. "I think it has a similar goal of dismantling public education," she said. "To base everybody's success solely on the teacher and not the family, the culture, the values, is naive at best and at worst insidious."

This year, the OED has tested value-added measure through a pilot program running in roughly 30 percent of Ohio's school districts. Teachers' effectiveness level,

which is determined by whether or not students learn what is expected of them over the course of the year, falls into one of five categories: least effective, approaching average, average, above average and most effective.

In Beachwood, a district involved in the pilot program, nearly half of the teachers were rated "average," while 23 percent were rated "above average" and 3 percent were rated "most effective." Nearly 20 percent of the teachers were rated "least effective."

Asked if they would recommend education as a future career, McBurney said that she would, but Morris said that he would not.

Morris said, "I just didn't anticipate this fight when I got into teaching."

## Clawson and Harris to join school board

BY SARAH-JANE LORENZO  
CAMPUS AND CITY EDITOR

Bill Clawson and Reuben Harris will join the Shaker Heights School Board come January 2012, as Shaker voters decided on Nov. 8.

When all precincts had reported, Clawson had 6,341 votes, while Harris, with 4,588 votes, pulled ahead of incumbent Peter Robertson, who had 4,342 votes.

Post-election, both Harris and Clawson reiterated a similar goal. Clawson emphasized the need for all students new to the district to be ready to learn at the level of their peers who are achieving. "It is very important as our district student base changes that we focus on catching kids up," said Clawson. "Our community relies on the schools to attract new residents . . . We've got to get our achievement up for everyone."

Harris' agreed that new students may require extra help. "There would have to be some intervention for students who come into the district with inadequate skill sets to be effective," he said.



BILL CLAWSON



REUBEN HARRIS

He also said his primary focus is the achievement gap. "My basic concern is how to find a way to improve expectations and outcomes for all students and become a model for other districts in closing the achievement gap," he said. In order to build a plan that would address the achievement gap, Harris said that the board should look at success models nationally and locally to find what would best fit Shaker schools. "We need to find out what best suits Shaker and Shaker students," he said.

Clawson also expressed concern regarding community involvement in the school system. "I think the community is giving us some messages that say that it's time [we] do something differently," he said. "It is so very important that the community is

more engaged in how we approach our educational processes." No matter their goals, both men will as board members confront difficult budget questions. "Financial challenges we're going to have require us to think differently," Clawson said. "We may need to get more grants . . . The community is very stretched on property taxes. We're going to have to find other ways to reduce costs."

## Q&A with Senturia



JULIANA JOHNSTON  
SENTURIA

Juliana Johnston Senturia was selected by Shaker voters to join incumbents Nancy Moore, Earl Williams and James Brady on City Council. Senturia is active in the Shaker League of Women Voters and has attended City Council meetings for several years.

**Would you support collaboration between the city and the school to fund a new field? Why or why not?**

I support a community-wide effort that would focus on private fundraising to meet our needs. Both the schools and the city are facing hard budget choices that make it essential to get individual donors, alumni, businesses and other residents committed to funding the project. But first, we need a study process to help us all get on the same page about what the needs are and to determine a realistic time line to achieving the goals.

**What is your opinion on foreclosures and how will you address the issue?**

Because of the impact of foreclosures, the city has been able to strategically acquire vacant properties, with a focus on returning lots into private ownership or into a strategic public benefit. We need to codify our goals for such 'land-banked' property through an open process with strong citizen input and representation from neighborhood associations so that standards can be applied evenly. There may be a role expanding for public-private partnerships with area non-profits on housing issues. Strategic use of federal, state and county grant opportunities can make projects possible that would otherwise be unaffordable at this time. This kind of investment can provide gathering places for neighbors, strengthen the sense of community, and encourage private investment in nearby properties.

COMPILED BY SARAH-JANE LORENZO





LUCAS PAPADEMOS WAS appointed interim prime minister Nov. 10 for Greece.

# 6 things to know in the news

**1** Thousands of university students marched through central London Nov. 3, protesting cuts of public spending and increased college tuition. The crowd of nearly 10,000 marched from the University of London to the financial district, chanting “No ifs, no buts, and no education cuts.” According to the Associated Press, 24 students were arrested on suspicion of public order offenses. “Students here don’t need to resort to protests over college education because of financial aid. If that changes, I would protest tuition costs,” said junior Richard Grant.

**2** Lucas Papademos was appointed interim prime minister of Greece Nov. 10. Over the past decade, Greece’s debt has expanded but remained unaddressed. European leaders agreed on a plan to decrease Greece’s debt, but the Prime Minister, George Papandreu, decided to put the plan up for public vote. The referendum included Greece removing itself from the Euro Zone, which caused chaos among the public. Papandreu removed the referendum and resigned Nov. 6.

**3** Italy, the European country with the second largest debt, is under public scrutiny. Italy established a plan to slowly pay off some of its debt. The International Monetary Fund, a bank that serves as a lender of last resort for countries, invited Italy Nov. 4 to ensure that they were following through with their plan to decrease the debt. Italy’s Prime Minister, Silvio Berlusconi, stepped down Nov. 12 because Italy’s parliament passed a policy to cut spending.

**4** Only 112 miles away from Shaker, cracks were found on the Davis-Besse nuclear power station. In the case of an earthquake, the reactor could be crushed, releasing radioactive substances. Although Shaker is outside both danger zones identified by the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, other factors could bring the radiation to this area. “It is a concern of mine that a problem like this would go undetected as long as it did,” science teacher Kenneth Culek said.

COMPILED BY JULIA SCHARFSTEIN, LIZ JACOB, LEO IZEN, AND ELANA ROSS

# ORANGE HIGH SCHOOL CLOSED AFTER EMAIL BOMB THREATS

**5** Bomb threats sent via school email forced Orange High School to close Nov. 7-9. The first threat was sent Sunday, Nov. 6 and included the clause, “... think Columbine...” By Monday, police and school officials had searched the building three times and found nothing suspicious. The FBI then joined the Pepper Pike police investigation. On Monday night, another email stated, “You have successfully survived Day 1 and for that I congratulate you. Only four more days to go.” School was reopened Thursday, Nov. 10 but only 60 percent of students attended. Students were not allowed to carry backpacks or large bags and were not permitted to leave until the end of the day. “If that happened in Shaker, I would be freaked out even if the school assured us we were safe,” freshman Isabel Rothman said. “The threat would still be there.”

COMPILED BY DAVID SHAKNO



Marvin Fong•The Plain Dealer

AN ORANGE STUDENT enters the building after three consecutive days of cancelled school due to a bomb threat sent via school email. Police and the FBI have yet to identify the sender.



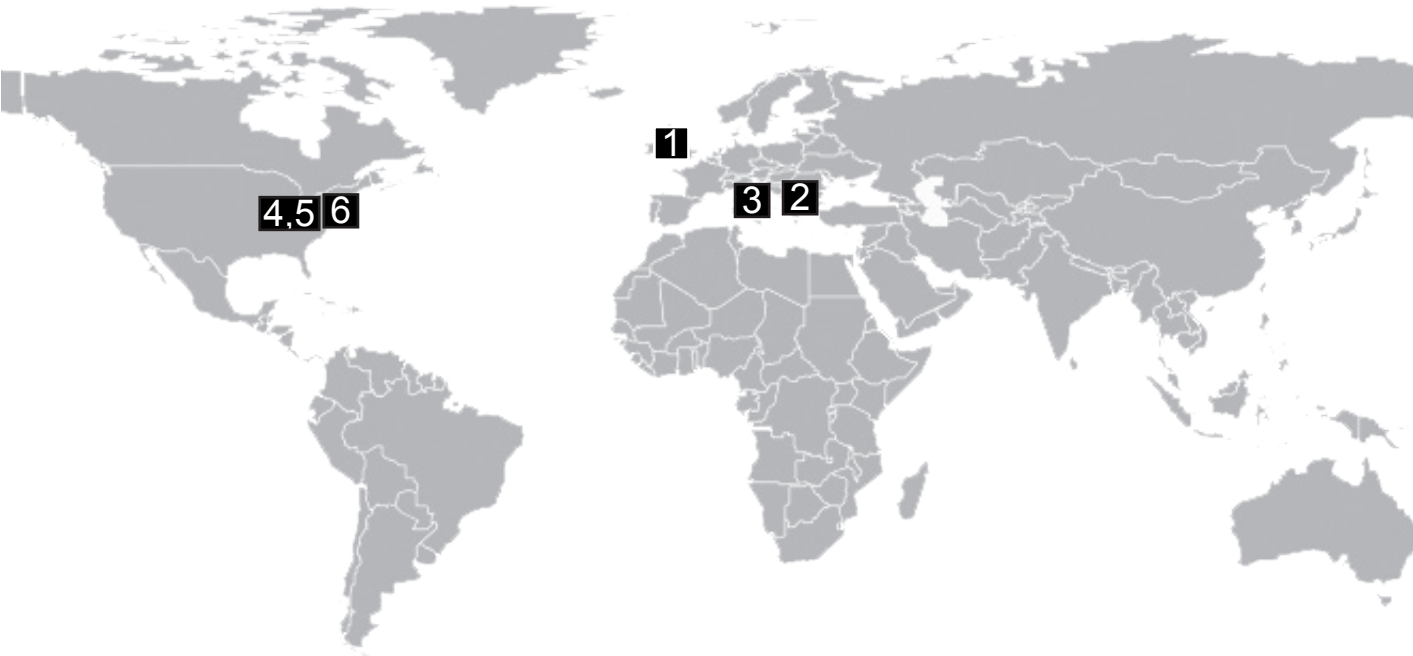
ESPN

PENN STATE STUDENTS riot after the firing of head coach Joe Paterno, who failed to report alleged sexual assault of a child to police.

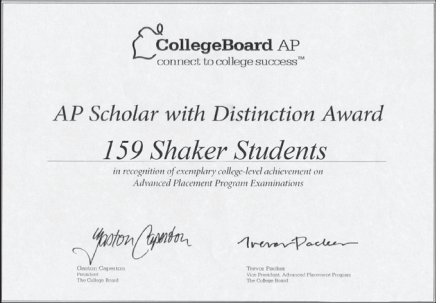
# Riots at Penn State

**6** Thousands of Penn State University students rioted Nov. 10 after football coach Joe Paterno was fired for inaction in a case of alleged child sexual abuse. As of Nov. 16, former Penn State defensive coordinator Jerry Sandusky was charged with sexually assaulting approximately 18 boys over 15 years, ABC News reported. Paterno and the PSU president were dismissed for not reporting a 2002 incident in which Sandusky was seen assaulting a child in the football locker room. Students tore down light posts and overturned a news van while rioting. Protester Jeff Heim told the New York Times, “The board started this riot by firing our coach. They tarnished a legend.” Paterno coached at PSU for 46 years. Junior Sam Mitro expressed his concern through his Facebook status Nov. 9, writing “a man who has given so much to this school... deserves to be able to leave on his own terms.”

COMPILED BY JULIA SCHARFSTEIN

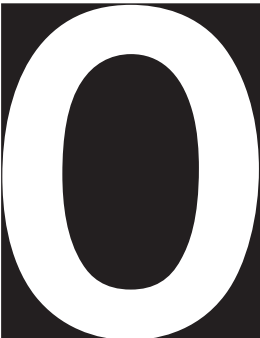






# AP Scholars break records

A record 159 Shaker students were named AP Scholars this year. Thirty six percent of Shaker students who took AP exams in 2011 received AP Scholar acknowledgment. During a time when the district faces constant criticism from the federal government, Shaker has exceeded its historical performance by setting a new school record with these scores.



Opinion

# Teach current events while they’re still relevant

Do you know who Momar Qaddafi was? Do you know how many prisoners were exchanged for Israeli soldier Gilad Shalit? If you don't know the answers to these questions or if you didn't know these people exist, you're not alone. Teaching current events is a rarity in school. That is, if they're part of the curriculum at all. What students will learn in school today has very little to do with the events of today. We don't even learn what is going on in Cleveland. Sure, the AP Government students can recite all of the amendments from memory and APUSH students might know the perfect way to answer a document-based question, but how many of those students can name all seven of the candidates who ran for City Council?



Sarah Shaw

Face it: 20 years down the road, Arab Spring may make it in to the history books, but for the most part, the generation of people who are living through it know nothing about it. Current events shouldn't be an excuse to get extra credit, but that is what they have become. Recently, I earned 10 extra credit points for finding 10 seconds worth of daily news to discuss. Why are we being rewarded for something we should have been doing in the first place? Current events are more interesting than the history that I am learning for the third time. Even though it's been a year since I last learned about the Civil War, I still remember the story. Your DBQ is not going to get you much farther than the AP test, and the amendments might help you if you choose to have a career in law. However, if we are learning to be worldly students and achievers, we must understand how to keep up to date on world events. With the district's move to the International Baccalaureate program, current world news should be part of every student's daily experience. And, if teachers spent a little bit of time each week on current events, maybe more people would pay attention. By the way, if you didn't know the answers to the questions mentioned earlier, Momar Qaddafi was the Libyan dictator who was overthrown by the Libyan people last October. One thousand and twenty seven prisoners were exchanged for Gilad Shalit because the Israeli army values human life above all other things. The names of the seven people who ran for city council are James Brady, Ed Long, Nancy Moore, Christopher Ramsay, Juliana Johnston Senturia, Dartanian Warr and Earl Williams. Now, do you know who won?

## Rite Art



Fari Bustamante • The Shakerite

# SCHOOL SPIRIT EQUALS WAR

A little competition is healthy, but how much is too much? The compulsive need to be the best class is tearing us apart instead of unifying us. The spirit day that took place the Friday before Homecoming stirred up lots of controversy between the junior and senior classes. What was supposed to be a harmless spirit day ended in Saran Wrapped cars and tearful meetings in the principal's office. Some competition between classes is acceptable, but we as a school have reached a new low this year. The whole purpose of a spirit day is to unite the school and show that we are spirited as a whole, not to pit classes against one another. Perhaps this class rivalry is a result of certain classes being favored over others. The class of 2013, for example, is an administration favorite and has been dubbed "the next great class" by Assistant Principal Eric Hutchinson. While this title may make the class of 2013 feel great, this label created resentment, and it's not limited to seniors. In an interview, Hutchinson said, "if you put a group of freshmen in an auditorium and a group of seniors in another auditorium and asked me which room I would like to walk in, I'm walking into the room of seniors." So, freshmen now have reason to be bitter, too. As a result of this recognition, classes are fighting one another rather than joining together as a school. The drama between the classes could have been avoided. Instead of setting classes against one another in a color war, the spirit day could have asked all classes to participate in the same theme, minimizing the class competition. The Halloween costume contest raises school spirit without adding underlying tension. Playful competition is fun, but fighting over

which class is the best is not. When this color war was introduced, we should have been planning ways to make it the best for the school, not how to dominate our intramural rivals. School spirit has turned into a war. When the juniors stole the homecoming spirit spotlight by adorning senior halls with green decorations, it caused chaos and people said it disrespected the seniors. Seniors then retaliated at juniors for having school spirit. Saying that the junior class was disrespectful isn't showing spirit, it is complaining about how much more spirit other people have. But just as being spirited shouldn't involve putting other classes down or pointing fingers, it shouldn't involve trashing other classes' space. We are not saying don't be spirited. Embrace the spirit days and love your graduating class. But come to school completely "blued" or "greened" out because you feel a connection to your school and your classmates, not because you feel a rivalry with another class. Decorate the halls, but don't trash the ground and cause injury and unnecessary work for the custodial staff. Competition goes beyond offending other classes when people have to worry about their health. Senior Cassie Torrence, who had a serious allergic reaction to juniors' latex balloons, said, "I think school spirit is lacking on important levels." We agree. When we turn spirit days into a competition, we lack spirit on an important level - school unity. "Beating" other classes doesn't make you the most spirited, finding your pride in your class and in the school as a whole, does.



"I think school spirit is lacking on an important level."

Cassie Torrence, senior



# IF THE PROS CAN DO IT, WE CAN TOO

The NFL has certain expectations of their fans. Behavior at Shaker hockey games leads some to ask for the same standards.

It is interesting that the NFL, a multi-billion dollar industry, is not afraid of tackling a problem that it has faced, yet we always seem to look away when it comes to the behavior of our fans at sporting events.

I have recently spoken to a few friends who refuse to attend Shaker hockey games because the environment at these games is far from family friendly.

These friends have young ones who are of pre-school to early elementary school age, love hockey, but will never buy a ticket to a game.

How does it reflect on our school when our neighbors feel intimidated by the fan behavior and refuse to attend events?

What does it say about our school when chants of "white trash" and "bull\*\*\*\*" are common? Where is the pride we have in our teams or even ourselves?

We celebrate a community of diversity and tolerance yet deliver chants (not cheers) that are degrading and obscene at best. So where do we start? Are students coming to events not in control of their faculties? Should this issue be taken up as a first step?

We cannot solve a problem unless we confront it first. In light of recent behavior at the homecoming dance, one incident is one too many.



Walter Slovickovski

I have always taken pride in the hockey played at our school. We are fortunate to have one of the premier coaches in the state, a very well-respected and soft-spoken man.

It must be insulting to him and his team that the behavior in the stands often overshadows the team's performance on the ice.

So let's start here. Post a sign on the doors at Thornton Park listing the expectations of anyone buying a ticket to the game.

Much like the NFL fan code, abusive language and unruly behavior will not be tolerated. If identified, the offending party will be escorted from the event and will not receive a refund for their ticket purchase. Multiple offenders may be escorted out at a given time.

This could be a very special season on the ice. Our Raiders showed last year that they can play with some of the best teams in the area.

Let's build an environment of raucous spirit, energy and pride. Let's make it difficult for opposing teams to play their best game because it is "our house," our home ice. Keep the offensive language at home, leave the derogatory chants in the past, and cheer on the Raiders in a season that promises to be very special.

Our mission statement for the Shaker Schools is clear: to nurture, educate, and graduate students who are true citizens of the world.

Does this apply only in the classroom? Or does it extend to every opportunity we have as we come together as a school community? Let us positively move forward with great energy, pride and a sense of what is right and proper. Go, Raiders!



## The NFL's Expectations of their Fans

The National Football League and its teams are committed to creating a safe, comfortable, and enjoyable experience for all fans, both in the stadium and in the parking lot. We want all fans attending our games to enjoy the experience in a responsible fashion.

When attending a game, you are required to refrain from the following behaviors:

- Behavior that is unruly, disruptive, or illegal in nature
- Intoxication or other signs of alcohol impairment that results in irresponsible behavior
- Foul or abusive language or obscene gestures
- Interference with the progress of the game (including throwing objects onto the field)
- Failing to follow instructions of stadium personnel
- Verbal or physical harassment of opposing team fans

"Event patrons are responsible for their conduct as well as the conduct of their guests and/or persons occupying their seats. Stadium staff will promptly intervene to support an environment where event patrons, their guests, and other fans can enjoy the event free from the above behavior. Event patrons and guests who violate these provisions will be subject to ejection without refund and loss of ticket privileges for future games."

## Are you too old for holiday hijinx?

Admit it, seniors. Some of you have no shame.

You trick-or-treated on Halloween.

Holiday traditions have always been for young children. The Shakerite wants to help you determine if you are too old to beg for candy, pull the wishbone from a turkey or sit on Santa's lap.

Have you ever been refused candy while trick or treating?

If yes, was it because you weren't wearing a costume?

Have you ever been older than the person distributing candy?

Are you older than 14\*?

Did you go to a Halloween party with your friends?

Did you drive to the party?

Last Thanksgiving, did your parents insist you were too old to have the turkey wishbone?

Did you fight a family member for it anyway?

Do you leave milk and cookies out for Santa?

Do you understand that reindeer really don't know how to fly?

Do you sneak around your house before Christmas searching for your presents?

Do you pay for Christmas presents with your own money?

If you answered yes to five or more of these questions, you are too old to trick-or-treat, split a wish bone and/or sit on Santa's lap. Sorry to burst your bubble.

\*According to a Shaker ordinance, you may not trick or treat if you are older than 14 years old.

## LETTER TO THE EDITOR

### Comparisons cause tension among classes

Just as no child wants to hear their parent say, "Billy, you are pretty good, but your little sister is AMAZING," no class wants to hear their administration continually praising a younger class. I get a bit insulted every time an administrator talks about how the class of 2013 is the next "great" class to come through Shaker Heights High School. Sure, it's OK to THINK that; it may even be true! But please, that is something that I do not want to hear at our class meeting. What even constitutes greatness in a class? Is it academic excellence? Fundraising? Spirit? Student Council? Behavior at the school dances? There are so many other things to consider! And class of '13, please don't take this as a personal attack. I honestly mean no ill will. I definitely see the many amazing traits that are attributed to your class. I just happen to think that my class is "great" as well. We're smart and spirited, and we

have a superb Student Council. Over the course of one school day we managed to organize a brief display of our class spirit by filling the halls with our cries of "1,2! 1,2!" right before tenth period. If you must call the class of '13 "great," then I think the class of '12 deserves the title "amazing." But better yet, let's abolish these titles! The tensions caused by favoring one class can lead to some very nasty situations (e.g. water balloon-gate, the great Saran Wrapping, etc.). So, to the administration, I have a request. PLEASE stop favoring classes. I don't want to hear that one class is great, and another class is not. I want to hear praise for us all; THAT is what gets us spirited.

In this school, there is only one entity that deserves the title of true, undeniable greatness. And that is the Raider Nation.

Noah Eisen,  
senior

We want to print your thoughts about our coverage, a school policy or anything on your mind. E-mail letters to the editor to [shakerite@shaker.org](mailto:shakerite@shaker.org), put them in the Shakerite mailbox in the Main Office or fill out the "Submit a Letter to the Editor" form on [shakerite.com](http://shakerite.com)





# Senior prevails in face of insensitivity

**M**y name is Noldon Starks and I am a senior here at Shaker Heights High School. When I was born the doctors diagnosed me with Ocular Motor Apraxia which deals with eye movement and motor skills. In spite of the diagnosis my mom and dad insisted on more tests. We finally went to a neurologist who gave me more tests that confirmed I did not have Ocular Motor Apraxia but Joubert Syndrome.



Noldon Sparks

Joubert Syndrome is a genetic disorder that affects my coordination, balance and speech. This is why I can't do some things like other people; for example, touching my fingers to my thumb one at a time or flipping my hand from palm up to palm down. I wasn't able to walk independently until I was three years old.

Even though I had these differences I still participated in intramural sports and other activities.

When I was in elementary school people would ask me why I shook my head and I wouldn't answer them. I would change the subject. I was too embarrassed to tell them what I had. When I was in the fifth grade I was walking down the hallway and this boy called me retarded. I told the teacher and the teacher told me that I should've called him the same thing. I didn't do that because I'm not the type of person who engages in confrontation. In middle school there wasn't much teasing

but people were still curious as to why I shook my head and I would still change the subject when they would ask me.

Here at the high school when I was a freshman there was a particular incident that made me very upset. I was walking down the sidewalk when a senior said "What's up?" to me and he started walking beside me imitating my head motions. The senior tried to play it off but I knew what he was doing. I gave him a mean look and when I was halfway from school I cried all the way home. I thought that seniors were supposed to set an example for underclassmen but I guess I was wrong.

The next year I was just teased because people could do it without any consequences; I wouldn't stand up for myself; not because I was scared but my feelings were hurt. Last year in the eleventh grade the teasing seemed to get worse. I was at the lunch table eating my lunch with some friends when a sophomore came over and started imitating my head motions with silliness. At that moment the incident didn't really phase me but when I went to my next class I broke down crying. I was lucky that the teacher turned the lights off because I didn't want my friends to see me crying. I felt like I was in dark place and couldn't get out.

This year, my senior year, nobody has really teased me like in the previous years. I guess they're all used to me now. I also realized that I DO HAVE JOUBERT SYNDROME and I will have it for the rest of my



life. I also realized that a lot of people assume they know what I have and those assumptions are false. People think that I have Tourette's Syndrome because of the head jerking. What people don't know is that they are two totally different syndromes. When I look at people with severe genetic and mental impairments I think to myself that my case of Joubert Syndrome isn't that bad.

I still thank God for giving me Joubert Syndrome now in contrast to what other people's disabilities are and what they go through on a daily basis. Most people who have Joubert Syndrome have severe deformities and have to go through hardship and pain everyday but I don't have to go through the pain everyday, so I call that a blessing. Now that I've accepted Joubert Syndrome, I enjoy life now and I'm not in that dark place anymore. I'm not embarrassed anymore to tell people why I shake my head. I have to say that the people who helped me through this are my parents. When I was crying excessively all of those times my mom would quote a Bible scripture to me that I will always remember: "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me." My father told me that I should ignore ignorance and negative people. That stuck with me also. I try to live by both pieces of advise. When I get depressed or am having a bad day I just repeat that scripture over and over and I feel much better.

I wrote this article solely because I want you guys, the readers, to be knowledgeable of Joubert Syndrome and know who I am and what I have. And just as important, I don't want you to feel sorry for me.



Reasons why Shaker won't get turf fields

10. We don't have the money.

9. We love the look of cat litter.

8. Toe-to-thigh casts make your butt look smaller.

7. Now we have a reason for losing.

6. Turf doesn't look enough like real grass.

5. Hay fever = team bonding.

4. Free mud masks.

3. Group discount on doctor bills.

2. Ninja weapon of choice: crutches.

1. Making up reasons why we won't get turf is a great pastime

# Council organizes ways to help others

To help inform students about Student Council's work, a column by Student Body President Michaela Matthews will appear in this space periodically.

**S**tudent Council sponsored a school-wide fundraiser Nov. 14-17 for the United Way. United Way focuses on identifying and resolving pressing community issues as well as making measurable changes in the community through partnerships with schools, government agencies, businesses, organized labor, financial institutions and community development corporations. From Monday through Thursday, ninth-period teachers collected donations. The ninth-period class that raised the most money received a pizza party from Student Council on Friday, Nov. 18. Student



Michaela Matthews

Council thanks everyone who participated. This coming holiday season Student Council's main focus is to raise money for our Adopt-a-Family project. The project pairs our Student Council with a local family in need, and we provide them with a wonderful holiday by purchasing items on the family's holiday wish list. We are off to a good start raising funds as our Halloween candy sale raised \$100 for our family.

Thank you to everyone who participated! With the ban on bake sales during lunch periods, Student Council will be at various community events accepting donations this year.

If anyone has any ideas for additional fundraising for the family, please let a Student Council member know. We are always open to new ideas!



Adopt a family is a Salvation Army program that matches needy families with sponsors who can support the family's needs at Christmas time.

# Bake sales, text message get Raiders ranting

BY NATASHA ANDERSON  
STAFF REPORTER

**“H**ey, I texted you!” or “I told you on Facebook.” Really? This is considered communication? A systematic “hey watz up?” “nm. lol.” We accept as a primary way to communicate? Every day we're sending mindless messages, ignoring the fact that our cell phones HAVE A CALL FEATURE! Shocking, I know, but by pressing the magical green button, you can actually hear a person on the other end! What an amazing concept. So next time you're sitting around about to text your best friend, why don't you have a REAL conversation inste ---- oh hey g2g, i got a txt.



BY SHANE MCKEON  
STAFF REPORTER

**D**ear Michelle Obama, If you want to make America healthy, don't single out fundraisers for extra-curricular activities. Kids are going to get the candy anyway. If they don't get it from a school-funded group, they'll get it from some sketchy dude with a bag full of Snickers behind the bleachers. Or worse. Heaven forbid, if they don't get their fill from bake sales, they might start drinking coffee or soda. Cutting bake sales is incredibly short-sighted. If you want drastic change in America's general health, don't go for Student Council's brownies. Go for the threetchickensandwichestwochocolatemilksabagochipsPopTartsandicecream diet some people are on now. Available from your friendly neighborhood high school cafeteria every day.





Cover Story

# As Shaker spirit devolves into an effort to win, it has now become a contest to

# BE THE BE

BY ALYSSE EBERHARD, MARISSA MILLER AND RACHEL SHAW  
COVER STORY EDITORS

## Color war spirit day escalates class rivalries

The posters read “Juniority,” and with them, the latest battle in Shaker’s class war began.

When students arrived at school Oct. 14, they found the school decorated in green. It was a color war spirit day, and students had been encouraged to wear the colors of their respective grades’ homecoming shirts – blue for seniors, green for juniors, yellow for sophomores and red for freshmen.

Assigning colors and decorating hallways was meant to showcase class spirit and increase students’ excitement about homecoming the following night.

In addition to dressing in green, juniors covered the school, including the senior hallway, in green. They hung posters around the school that read “Juniority,” asserting that juniors – not seniors – are really the dominant force in the school.

“The junior class has natural spirit, and it’s not just a one-time thing. It’s a consistent trend,” Junior Class President Parker Smith said.

“The seniors just have spirit by default because they are the senior class. There wouldn’t have been any senior pep rally if it was not for junior spirit,” Smith was referring to the “pep rally” that seniors organized to occur before tenth period Oct. 14. They gathered in the senior hallway, where they chanted cheers about the class of 2012 in order to dis-

play their school spirit.

This was encouraged by members of the senior class who felt that the juniors had gone overboard in decorating the school. “I think it was not only uncalled for, but unnecessary,” senior Cassie Torrence said.

“I think that what the juniors did was originally funny, but then it got really out of hand,” stated Senior Class President Michelle Cahn.

She added, “I think that putting all the green stuff in the senior hallway went a little too far – the juniors will have their chance to be seniors. They don’t need to step on ours.”

The decorations that the juniors put up were supposed to be harmless, but they proved to be a safety and health hazard. Before first period, the 110 hallway floor was littered with long, curly strands of ribbon that challenged students using crutches and wheelchairs. One teacher became entangled and fell. More seriously, Torrence suffered a severe allergic reaction because of latex balloons the juniors used to decorate the hallways. Her body broke out in hives, her heart rate was twice the normal rate and she experienced difficulty breathing. “The seniors aren’t [annoyed] that you have more spirit,” she said. “They’re [annoyed] because you almost sent a senior to the hospital.”

In response to juniors covering the school in green, a few seniors retaliated by Saran Wrapping the cars of the re-

sponsible juniors.

“The juniors pranked us, and we pranked them back,” said senior Jessie Komp, who helped Saran Wrap the cars. “It’s not personal; it’s just a prank. I think that if it’s all fun and games, it is completely acceptable.”

“I think it was unfortunate that it ended how it did, and again, it’s not personal. It’s just spirit and seniority,” Komp said.

The juniors whose cars were wrapped went to administrators. The administrators used Twitter to figure out which seniors were involved. Those seniors were called down to the office and given a warning against any future actions requiring disciplinary attention. Although some teachers were upset by the day’s events, Assistant Principal Eric Hutchinson said that he appreciated the juniors’ decorating the school in green, as it was a strong display of class spirit. “I believe that juniors and seniors deserve certain allowances. I think they deserve additional considerations. They have earned the right,” he said.

As for the impromptu senior pep rally, Hutchinson said that it was a fantastic demonstration of spirit. “Go seniors! I love my seniors. I would run through a wall for my seniors,” he said.

## Demise of pep rallies undermines unity

Sophomore Conor Matthews stated, “As a member of Student Council, it’s disappointing to see that the people who dress up on spirit days are the minority, especially when there was a time at this school when those people were the majority.”

Most people associate things like dressing up for ‘prep day’ as having school spirit, but what school spirit is truly about is being a proud member of Raider Nation and how you show that pride.”

Math teacher Joel Rathbone (’95) recalls a time when group spirit was common. “Time heals all wounds, but I remember [spirit] being more of a group camaraderie,” he said.

Rathbone said that the general lack of school spirit now is influenced by the socioeconomic diversity in Shaker – a student’s background directly relates to his or her feelings about school spirit.

At other schools, students show school pride by supporting athletics and cheering for teams during pep rallies and games. Pep rallies were common when Rathbone was at Shaker, but he said that they would not serve to increase school spirit today because of bad student behavior.

“The behavior of students when they get together in

large groups is unacceptable,” Rathbone said. Although Shaker built the North Gym to be able to hold the entire student body at a pep rally, it held exactly one. They were abandoned after some students acted out, and these days, many students are unaware of athletic teams’ important contests.

Hutchinson expressed disappointment that Shaker does not hold pep rallies.

“We don’t have certain things that bring us together as a school community because of the fear of someone doing something that embarrasses the school,” he said. However, that leaves spirit days as the only times for students to cheer for their teams, and a sense of competition against rival schools seems to have turned inward, turning students against rival classes.

Student Council Spirit Head Ana Sinicariello feels that while school spirit is important, it is not at the level that it should be. “The number of people who respond [to spirit days] doesn’t reflect the number of people who love Shaker,” she said.

That is most likely true. However, it often seems as though spirit days are not about showing your Shaker spirit, but rather about emphasizing specific class spirit and

rivalries. There is an obvious disconnect between spirit days and actual school spirit.

Asked which class has the most school spirit, Conor said, “Seniors, without a doubt. When you’re at the top of the pyramid, it’s easy to show school spirit and be proud to be a Raider.”

Hutchinson is known for perpetuating that viewpoint. However, he said, “Honestly, I think this junior class is a special class. From day one, they just seemed to be on board as far as loving their class. No class is perfect, but I think this junior class just has some aspects about them that are really attractive for our whole building.”

“Spirit is something that is waning all across the country,” Hutchinson added.

“Young people have so many different distractions now. Caring about your school and what your school is doing is not as easy as it used to be.”

Despite distractions and other priorities that students face, Hutchinson still feels that increasing school spirit is important to Shaker as a whole.

He said, “School is your second home. You should care about the red and white,” Hutchinson said.

Even when you’re wearing blue, red, yellow or green.



fort to champion class above school,

# BEST CLASS

## Council members say class rivalries boost overall spirit

Judging by events such as spirit days, school spirit as a whole seems to be decreasing while competition among classes is booming, often with questionable results.

"I think competition between the classes makes the classes stronger, and making the classes stronger makes Shaker stronger. Competition is always a good thing and if you take away that, you take away a sense of identity," said Smith. "Taking away the sense of competition between classes would hurt the school overall. Shaker doesn't have enough spirit as it is."

However, it often seems as though increasing class competition is the only method of increasing school spirit, and that competition is therefore widely encouraged, by students and adults.

Sophia Bellin-Warren, 2008-09 student body president, said that while competition can increase spirit, there are alternative ways to do so. "I think that the best method is to come up with creative spirit ideas," Bellin-Warren stated.

"Sometimes this involves competition, but other times it simply means thinking outside the box and creating events that are new and exciting."

When Bellin-Warren attended Shaker, competition between classes was not as prevalent. "Sure, we had competitions, but we also worked together a lot. In Student Council, we made sure that all the classes were working hard to make their grade more united and the school as a whole a better place. We wanted all classes to succeed," she stated.

The goal of class unity that '09 set out to accomplish seems to be deteriorating with competition-oriented spirit days and the class warfare that comes with it.

Student Body President Michaela Matthews acknowledged that efforts to arouse spirit can be perceived as divisive. "Competition is not encouraged between the grades, but with spirit days like color wars, it can seem like it," Matthews said. She added that competition among grades has not led to any problems that she is aware of.

Matthew Podl, sophomore class president, thinks that competition can lead to some problems. "But that's only when people don't understand the limits," he said.

However, senior Michelle Hurley said that class promotion can backfire when some students grow impatient with their class' status. "I think [competition] can become a bad thing if we allow it. Some classes just need to wait their turn — they're thirsty!" Hurley stated.

In most cases, the competition is purely for the sake of proving which class is the loudest or the most energetic or the wildest, rather than advancing the overall spirit of the school. Spirited competition instead seems to emphasize rivalries among students and classes fighting to be the best class in the Raider Nation.

"Competing against other classes about who's the most spirited definitely adds to the amount of people who dress up for spirit days," Conor stated. "It's fun to show which class truly runs the school. I think classes are not becoming more competitive, considering that the high school as a whole is becoming less spirited. If there is competition, it's on a smaller scale."





Spotlight

## Fund raising on a whole new level

10 THE SHAKERITE • 21 NOVEMBER 2011

Sevenly.org is a website that sells \$22 T-shirts promoting a different charity each week. Seven dollars of each purchase goes to the charity. Money raised during the week of Nov. 14 went to Drop in the Bucket, which provides people with clean water in Africa. The related T-shirt reads "Life – just add water."



# Dear Reader,

## Letter-writing may be old-fashioned, but it's still personal

BY WILL GYURGYIK  
STAFF REPORTER

Reaching into the mailbox, you grab the mail. You're not expecting anything. But you still subtly hope for something interesting as you causally flip through the small pile.

A few catalogs. Some business letters. A magazine. Bills. An advertisement for a local painting company. As you glance at an envelope that bears your name, you're excited, but the excitement dies quickly when you notice the college emblem. Another college endorsement. All the same as last month. There aren't any letters addressed to you, but you don't give it a second thought as you go off to check your phone and Facebook messages. With email, texting, and social networks taking over the lines of communication, mailboxes are short of personal letters and the United States Postal Office, heading for bankruptcy, is short of money.

An annual survey by the post office showed that typical households received a personal letter only once about every seven weeks in 2010. In 1987, it was one every two weeks.

According to the USPS, this decline in letters is "primarily driven by the adoption of the Internet as a preferred method of communication." Only 82.5 million standard pieces of mail were sent in 2010. If that sounds like a lot, compare it to Radicati Group's statistic that 29.4 billion genuine emails were sent each day the same year. That's 10.7 trillion emails sent that year and 340 thousand every second.

Junior Anthony DeFelice, who believes letters are obsolete, said he doesn't write letters because "it's called email."

The popularity of electronic messages is one reason why the USPS faces bankruptcy. "We serve every household in this coun-

try for 44 cents a letter," retired postal worker Michael Levine said in a New Jersey On-Line article, "Think about that." But this begs the question: do people still even send them?

The last time many students wrote a letter, it wasn't by their own choice. DeFelice said

that the only time he ever wrote a letter was in seventh or eighth grade. It was required by his English class.

Similarly, Junior Vita Brown recalled, "The last time I wrote one was when I was nine and it was to my pen pal. It was required by school." She also sends emails instead.

Let's face it: emails are easier to write, quicker to send, and any typed mistake can be erased with a tap of the backspace key. Not to mention, they don't require the price of stamps, envelopes and paper. Yet despite the convenience of communication through technology, letters hold their own unique values, both material and sentimental.

Personal letters are sent by those who have taken the time to sit down, write, pay for a stamp and an envelope and send the letter.

"Time is our most valuable commodity. If I'm willing to spend time on you that shows how important you are to me," said English Department Chairwoman Elaine Mason. She writes more letters than emails because "it's a very tactile thing. I like the feel and the smell of the paper." Junior Rebecca Smith, who keeps in touch with a friend at Ohio University via letters, emphasized that these sorts of messages are "more personal because you can get emails from stores and colleges, but handwritten letters only come from people who care about you."

Sophomore Anja Block also said they were more personal because "I recognize all of my friends' handwriting."

However, with email and the keyboard making letters and handwriting obsolete, Mason said that "the actual skill of physically writing something is going to be lost." According to a Morning Journal article, "Soon, teaching cursive handwriting will no longer be part of the required curriculum in Ohio school districts."

Smith said that letters have the advantage of being material and

not digital. "Emails and Facebook messages eventually get deleted and lost, but letters are tangible things you can't delete."

Block believes that more thought is put into writing a letter as opposed to rapidly typing or texting a message. "I like that

whatever [people] say in a letter, whatever is going through their mind can't be taken back after it's been written down."

History teacher Elizabeth Plautz explained that emails are "more reactive than proactive." She said that when people type or text, they are immediately responding without much emphasis on thought. Letters, on the other hand, are composed. "One of the differences is when people wrote a letter, it took time and effort, so it took thought."

Smith, like many other students who write letters, still sends more emails. "Most people think email is a more practical way of communication. So if you want to get in touch with someone, email or Facebook is your best bet."

Plautz hasn't sent a letter to her sons in college, resorting instead to easy and instant communication by phone or through text. She said, "I feel I have more communication with them and it keeps up the warmth of the relationship." However, reminded of letters' qualities, Plautz said she plans to write to them soon. She said that with technology taking over and the presence of letters diminishing, they "become even more special."

Senior Emily Hirsch, the literary editor for Semanteme, thinks people probably don't send as many letters because "combined with the time and the effort you put into it and not knowing the outcome, it's just easier to send a text or email. If you send a letter, you expect one back. It's reciprocal. It's just that no one wants to initiate it."

Block argued that "[people] imagine [writing letters] as a process that takes longer than it actually does." She thinks that students might also not write letters because sitting down and writing is too similar to their time-consuming, written schoolwork.

Yet letters don't have to be long. Gwen Thompkins, National Public Radio East Africa correspondent, wrote an NPR article, "A

simple 'Wish you were here' can mean so much more than an overwrought email."

Letters might be inefficient, but they have their advantages and values. As Mason said, "It's like cooking a great meal for a friend instead of picking up carryout."



Anthony DeFelice



Emily Hirsch



Anja Block



Vita Brown



Rebecca Smith



Elizabeth Plautz



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# how to be a hipster:

## 5 shaker students' views on what it takes



Clockwise from top left: Maeve Scully, Ian Clark, Shala Miller, Ariella Altchouler, Ian Mercer.

TEXT BY GRAHAM FINE

PHOTOS BY LIZ JACOB & SHALA MILLER

**A**ccording to senior Shala Miller, “hipster” is a loose term. The more positive connotation with the term is a “hip” kid who is “unique and different.” Although, Miller added, “the negative side, which I hear the most, is someone who ...HAS to be different... they try too hard to be cool and unique, and they all end up doing pretty much the same thing.”

Senior Ian Mercer adds to this complex view of hipsters, noting that “a hipster is no one thing.” Mercer said that being a hipster is “a collectivization” of one’s clothes, tastes and personality into “one dynamic creation.”

Junior Ian Clark feels that hipsters are “distinguishable by their trendiness”

Whether a hipster is unique naturally or by choice, it is clear

that the title of hipster doesn’t come naturally for some. Junior Ariella Altchouler said, “a lot of people randomly tell me they think I am one,” adding that many people think this because of her hair-style; bleached with one side buzzed.

Miller said, “I think a true hipster would think I’m too ‘mainstream,’” citing her interests in popular music and fashion.

Mercer stayed close to his definition of a hipster when describing what makes him unique. “I pride myself on owning things, watching movies and owning clothes that others don’t have,” Mercer said, adding “the most hipster thing about me is bragging about how I do stuff first.”

Freshman Maeve Scully said that the “most hipster thing about her” is her style, pointing out that she was one of the first of her friends to sport a pixie haircut.

On the hippest places in town, the group is consistent: Coventry is a hipster hot-spot. “The hippest place in town is Coventry,

hands down,” said Miller who attributes this to unique clothing stores and a hip music scene.

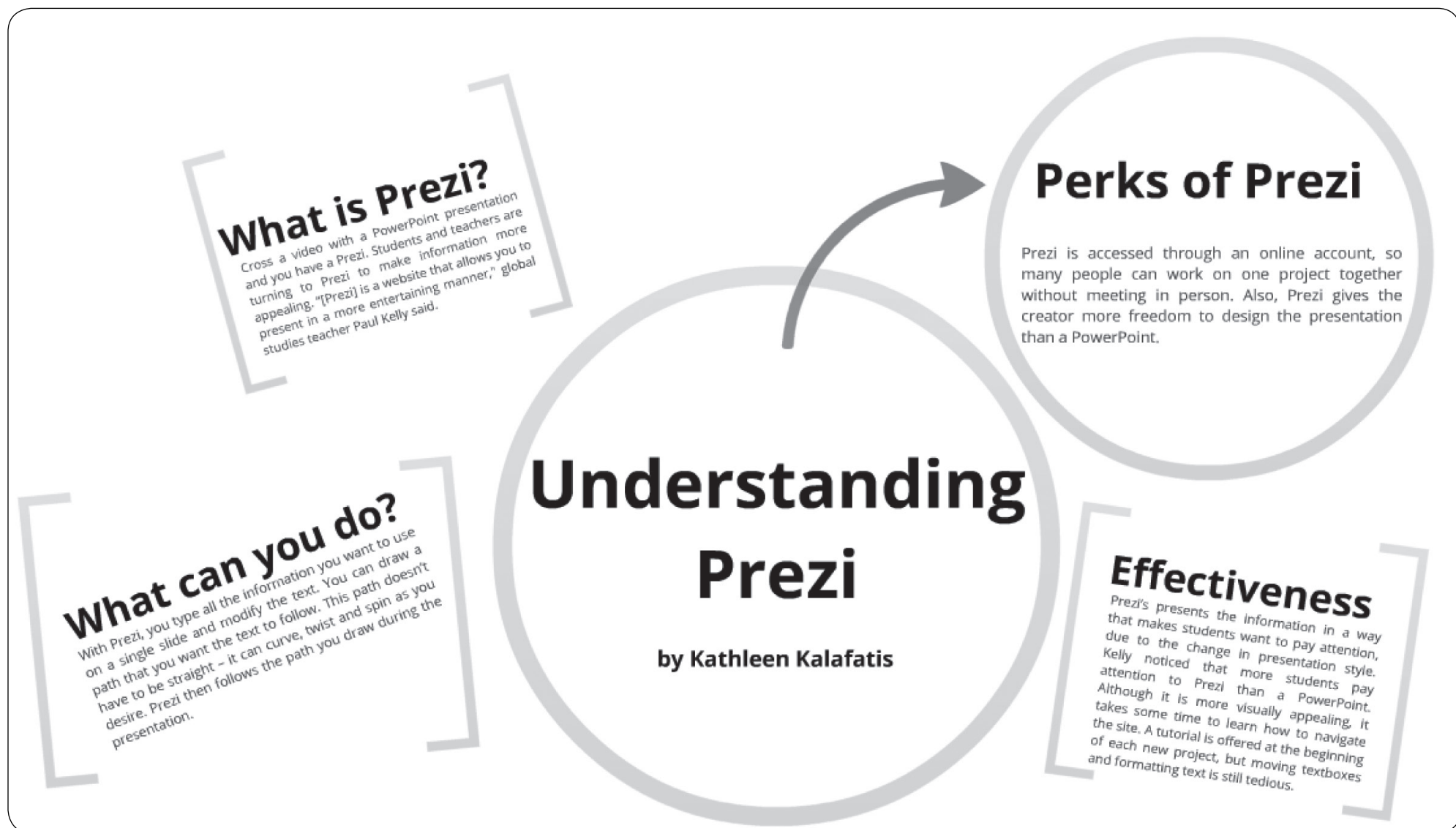
Similarly, many of the students felt that downtown Cleveland is also a hip scene. Altchouler cites places like The West Side Market, the Asian market and local art studios as being the highlights of downtown’s hipness.

Also of upmost importance to hipsters are their musical tastes. Altchouler adds a more in-depth meaning to the musical tastes of hipsters. “I love bands and artists that have songs for every emotion and the best is if I can relate . . . to the lyrics,” Altchouler said.

Though it is clear that hipsters are unique and trendy, the bonds of hipsterdom aren’t absolute. “Whatever, I don’t care,” Miller said referring to her deviation from the standard hipster mold. “Gap has cute clothes and Beyonce is a legend.”

*For a more in-depth look at how you can be a hipster in Cleveland, see Alex Rich’s “How to Be a Hipster” on shakerite.com*





# RUBBERNECKING WON'T MAKE IT CHANGE

BY MARCIA BROWN  
STAFF REPORTER

To break the harsh news: there is nothing new to see at the intersection of Chagrin and Lee. Yet, as many late-for-school-students know, the intersection of Chagrin and Lee is rubbernecking central. The Dominion East Ohio Gas Company is replacing the gas lines there, and anyone who comes to school that way risks tardiness as drivers unfailingly slow down to gawk at the construction site – day after day – even though little changes overnight.

The Chagrin-Lee construction site is just one of many that will crop up as Dominion replaces 5,000 miles of piping to increase safety and reliability of its gas lines. The project has taken a toll on Shaker's traffic situation. The \$2.7 billion effort is making students late to school—until Dec. 1, that is. Then no more excuses. "We are trying to keep the process as painless as possible for residents," said Dominion Senior Communications Specialist Neil Durbin.

No matter. People will make it painful all by themselves. The phenomenon of slowing down to stare at unusual events beside the road has been the annoyance of drivers and passersby since the beginning of driving. It's human psychology at its worst. The slang term for it is "rubbernecking," and it causes miles of traffic jams and threatens teenage drivers with distraction. In Shaker there are fewer miles to jam up, but drivers somehow find a way to slow down traffic near a construction project or recent accident.

"It's not as much the traffic as the people who drive really slowly and think that they can park in the middle of an intersection," senior Connor Feher said.

To be fair, rubberneckers at the Chagrin-Lee site may be hoping to see something similar to the

attempted robbery of a pizza delivery man foiled by a gunshot that occurred there May 19. Nevertheless, all this peeking poses a threat greater than arriving late to first period. According to "Psychology Today," drivers who see something shocking, like a graphic accident, tend to miss what comes next—like someone's back fender.

Not only does rubbernecking slow down traffic, but it also creates more accidents. Turning your entire body sideways to view the unfortunate victims on the shoulder can be dangerous to the car in front of you. Attempting to solve the problem of stemming human curiosity is virtually impossible.

However, as usual, Europe is ahead of us.

In Great Britain, the government is experimenting with hiding accidents behind large screens to prevent the usual gawking at the wreckage. This proactive measure is taken before the aid arrives, hiding the fire trucks, police cars and damaged vehicles behind it.

Although resourceful, the 150-foot high screen will probably be almost as distracting as the original accident.

Whether it is a construction worker popping up out of a hole in the road, or a motorcycle that careened off the road, people's natural curiosity seems to get the better of them. No matter what, rubbernecking is dangerous in any context. And it's a tough habit to break.

According to Scott Young, author of numerous psychology books, it takes 30 days to break a habit. That's 30 straight days of being late to school.

But what hope is there for teenage drivers if adults can't seem to stop staring? High school parent Anja DeGerogia admits she gawks, too.

She said, "I find rubbernecking annoying, but I myself am guilty of it."



**"Nobody in the class wrote penis in their essay!" 12:31 p.m. Room 224**

**"Whenever I play solitaire, I get really sweaty." Oct. 27 Room 101**

**"That's how rich I am; I can afford two pieces of pizza!" Oct. 26 11 a.m. lunch line**

**"Being around people who are high gives me the munchies!" Sixth-period lunch Nov. 2**

**Check out shakerite.com for even more heard in the halls**

## Shaker Heights Teachers' Association



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# Football forced to forfeit



The football team forfeited to Warrensville Heights Oct. 22 because Principal Michael Griffith deemed Warrensville’s field unplayable. Griffith arrived an hour before the game and, after he sank to his ankles in mud, said the field was unsafe for either team. Solon offered to host the game, but Warrensville refused. View more pictures at shakerite.com.



# MAYOR LEIKEN ISN'T BUYING IT



Marissa Miller•The Shakerite

SHAKER PARENTS LEE Weingart and Doug Neary proposed a plan to Mayor Earl Leiken and City Council for two artificial turf fields and a new track Oct. 24 at City Hall. Field hockey players attended the meeting in their uniforms. Weingart and Neary showed pictures to help depict the conditions of Shaker’s current athletic fields.

## Despite pleas from parents, athletes, turf field proposal gains no foothold

BY KYRA HALL AND IAN ROUND  
RAIDER ZONE EDITORS

Shaker parents Lee Weingart and Doug Neary proposed a plan to finance two turf fields and a new track to City Council at City Hall Oct. 24, but Mayor Earl Leiken isn’t buying. The proposal suggested the school district and city jointly fund the \$2.5 million project. “We need to approach a problem that has been nagging this community: deplorable, unplayable and dangerous fields,” said Weingart, a former Cuyahoga County commissioner. According to The Sun Press, Weingart wants the city to seek a \$2.5 million loan from local banks in order to cover the cost for replacing the track and installing two artificial turf fields at the high school, and at Woodbury Elementary. The loan repayment would be split between the district and the city. Each would pay about \$6,000 a month over the next 15 to 20 years. In an interview, Weingart said this project would be a three-way partnership be-

tween the private sector, the schools and the city. Weingart couldn’t name any donors at this time but clarified that “there are a handful of people who have committed an amount of money, but that amount is nowhere near what project will cost,” Weingart said. Weingart said that other schools or teams could rent the turf and that eventually the costs could be recouped. At the meeting, Neary stressed that the installment of these fields and track would benefit all Shaker residents, not just athletes. “I believe it’s a misperception that this proposal is about athletics,” Neary said. “It’s about community participation.” Following the proposal, Mayor Earl Leiken sympathized with Weingart and Neary. “I’m fortunate my grandson is a hockey player rather than a soccer player, otherwise he’d be sitting right there with you,” Leiken said. In a phone interview, Leiken agreed that residents should feel comfortable with the conditions of the fields. However, he said there are many issues to consider.

This year, the state legislature cut Ohio’s state support in half and eliminated the Ohio estate tax, through which the school received \$3-4 million yearly. “The city just doesn’t have resources right now to invest in school fields,” Leiken said. He stressed that the city and schools need to conduct further studies to find alternative solutions other than turf. Weingart feels the only alternative solution would be better drainage under a natural grass field. However, because of northeast Ohio’s inclement weather, turf fields would be the best solution to withstand wear and tear. Weingart was unsatisfied by Leiken’s response to find alternative solutions. “The city and our field committee have two completely different views on this issue,” Weingart said. Weingart revealed that the schools are putting together a facility review commission, which will review field conditions. He said, “With turf fields, if it rains at 9 o’clock, you can play on the field by 9:15.”

He’s seen this before

Could Shaker’s distressed athletic fields jeopardize its move to the Northeast Ohio Conference?

NOC Commissioner Dan Gerome stated in an email interview that Shaker doesn’t need to worry about expulsion from the NOC. “[The NOC] did look at the fields and saw that they were not always perfect, but the total program at Shaker outweighed the field issues. “There is always the hope that Shaker would go to turf fields or figure out a way to upgrade their grass fields,” he wrote. “We have not voted any school out of the conference because of poor field conditions.” Gerome, Lakewood’s former football coach and athletic director, indicated Shaker’s problems are not unique. “Any school district that still has natural grass fields has the northeast Ohio weather issue as a major factor,” he stated. Gerome noted that with so many teams playing on each field, it is impossible to have playable grass once the rain starts. “There is no time to let the fields ‘get better,’” he wrote. “More than mud and dirt, it is also a safety issue.”



IAN ROUND



# EAGER TO CAST AWAY CRUTCHES

BY IAN ROUND  
RAIDERZONE EDITOR

It's getting crowded in the elevator these days. Senior basketball player Aaron Porter, senior hockey player Anthony Johnson and senior Irish dancer Cara Sutherland are three of a surprisingly high number of people restricted to walking in a boot or on crutches due to injury. Porter doesn't know why. "It seems like every day I see a new person in a boot or on crutches," he said.

Sutherland suggested that stress fractures may result from a calcium deficiency, but doesn't believe it contributed greatly to her own stress fracture.

Nurse Paula Damm controls elevator keys but doesn't know how many are being used. "I have no idea. I've given out a lot of keys and haven't gotten them all back," she said.

"Walking on crutches is literally the most annoying thing ever!" said Porter, who broke his tibia just under the left knee at an open gym Sept. 21. "It made almost everything I did very difficult and I'd get ridiculously tired just trying to get from one class to the next."

Sutherland suffered a stress fracture in the second metatarsal of her right foot when she landed a jump at a competition. She wore a walking boot for about a month. "Walking is so difficult! The boot adds five pounds. I got winded going up a flight of stairs," she said.

Johnson tore two ligaments and broke a bone in his left foot during a

hockey game Aug. 28 at Gilmour. He's used crutches since. "Well, it's not very fun," he said. "It's exhausting, and my armpits always hurt. Other than that," he added sarcastically, "it's great."

Johnson has been sidelined for 10 weeks, and can't play again until at least mid-December. However, he said he can work out three times a week. "I've been swimming and I'm able to do upper body workouts," he said. "I'm just trying my best to stay in shape for the hockey season."

But because he can't walk, Johnson still can't exercise his legs. "I haven't even tried," he said.

Porter, however, was completely unable to exercise while he was injured. He was much weaker and slower when he was allowed back onto the court about six weeks later. "My left leg is way skinnier than my right leg now," he said. "At first it was impossible to run, but now it's easier. But I still can't run full speed."

All are confident they will make full recoveries.

"I am not worried about my strength or speed [right now]; I will be 100 percent when I am ready to return," Johnson said.

But how far is he from 100 percent? "Pretty far, because I still am not allowed to walk."



**Name:** Anthony Johnson  
**Sport:** Hockey  
**Injury:**  
"[I] tore two ligaments and broke my tibia, or something," in a freak accident during a hockey game, he said.

**Date of injury:** Aug 28  
**Is there a trick to walking on crutches?**  
"I actually take lessons," he joked. "When you do it for really long, you get used to it."

**What's it like not being able to participate?**  
"Well it's for sure the most frustrating thing I can think of, especially with the impact I know I provide on each game."



**Name:** Cara Sutherland  
**Sport:** Irish dance  
**Injury:**  
Stress fracture in right foot's second metatarsal.  
**Date of injury:** Oct 2



**How do you walk on crutches?**  
"It's a different motion, I think. Your hip pulls the foot instead of the knee."  
**Why the cheetah-print straps on your boot?**  
"Cheetah print is kind of my thing, so I taped over the straps to make the boot more unique, especially since there were so many other walking boots this fall. I got a lot of compliments! And it's better than always hearing, 'Oh my gosh, what happened?'"



**Name:** Aaron Porter  
**Sport:** Basketball  
**Injury:**  
Broken left tibia. "I went up for a layup and I landed awkwardly."



**Date of injury:** Sept 21  
**What did you do when you could walk again?**  
"All I wanted to do [when I was sidelined] was play basketball, but I couldn't. So the first thing I did when I got off crutches was go to the gym and shoot around. I couldn't make a shot to save my life but it felt good just to finally dribble a basketball again."

COMPILED BY IAN ROUND



LIZ JACOB•THE SHAKERITE

GRAHAM FINE•THE SHAKERITE



# RECORD DOESN'T REFLECT TEAM'S PROGRESS

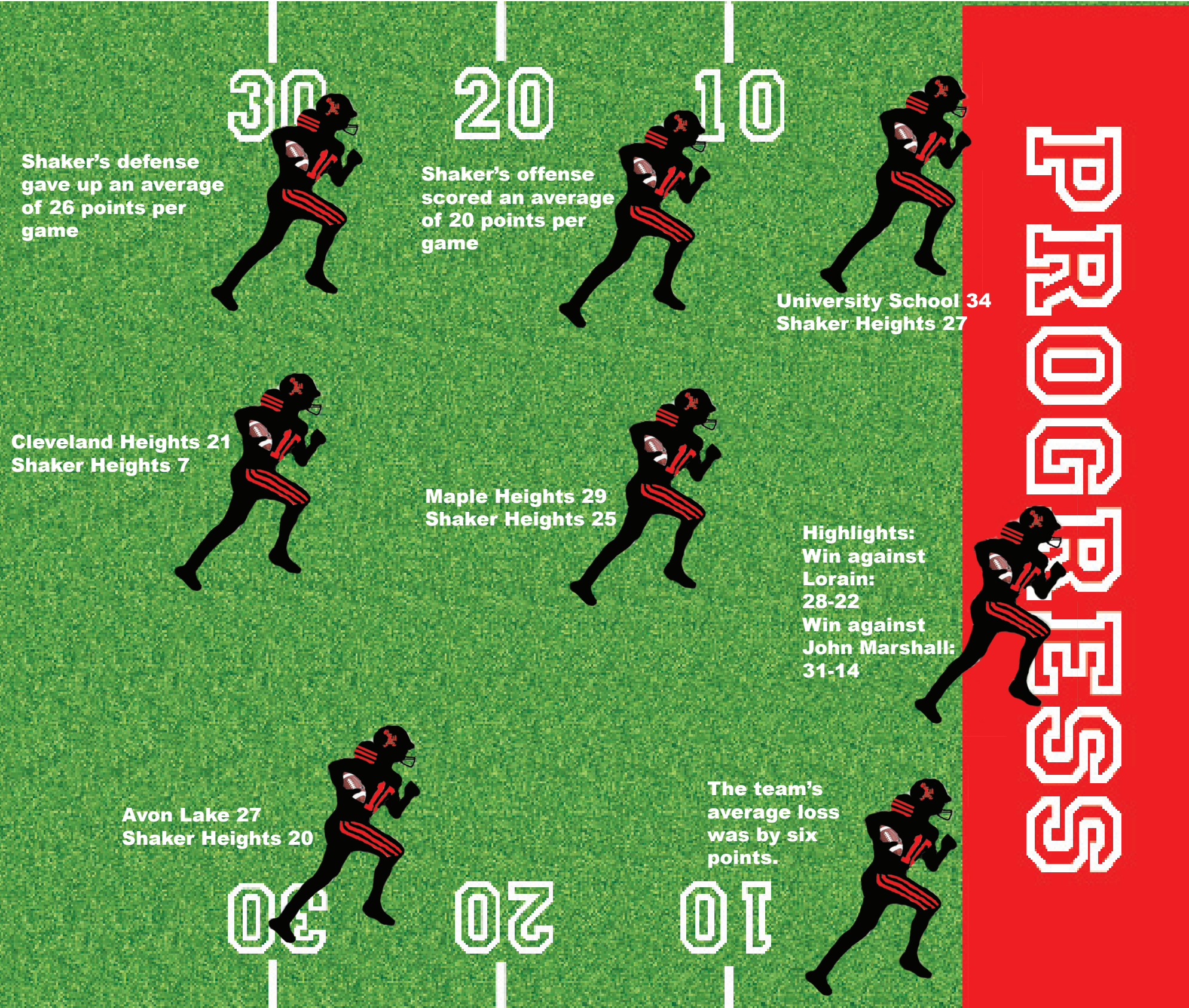
BY KYRA HALL  
RAIDER ZONE EDITOR

It's hard to look at 2-8 positively. But when 2-8 comes after 2-8 and 1-9 seasons, you have to look for numbers that tell a brighter story. Despite a new coaching staff, the varsity football team finished 2-8 for the second consecutive season. (One of those losses was a forfeit to Warrensville Heights, whose field was unplayable). However, some, including Athletic Director Don Readance, feel the record does not accurately reflect the team's performance. "We played some of the top competition this year; I believe our record is deceiving," Readance said. This season, the Raiders played four teams ranked among Ohio's top 25 teams, including Cleveland Heights, which was un-

defeated in the regular season. Shaker's offense averaged 20 points a game, while defense gave up 26 points per game. So, on average, Shaker was within six points of every team it lost to this year. "We have had a lot of improvement as a team because we competed in just about every game up until the end," senior quarterback Connor Hall said. Other signs of progress are impossible to measure. Head coach Jarvis Gibson wants his players to positively represent Shaker student-athletes and the Shaker community, and he strongly believes that the team is improving. "Our goal was to build a foundation, and I believe it was built," Gibson said. Some attitudes blocked the way, however. "Collectively, we found that this was a team full of individuals," Gibson said. Gibson's goals addressed changing the "individual

culture" to a "team culture." Junior defensive lineman Hombre Thomas agreed with Gibson. "Everyone wanted to be a superstar, and no one wanted to do what it takes to get basic things done," Thomas said. Gibson stressed that in order to continue improving, players must stay on task amid distraction. Some distractions occurred when several fights erupted during junior varsity games and a few players were suspended for violating the athletic code. Readance explained that going forward, the athletic code will be strongly enforced by a binding contract, and there will be consequences for those who refuse to comply. So, is there a bright side to 2-8? "We still have a ways to go," Readance said. "Many things must be evaluated from A-Z."

**"We played some of the top competition this year; I believe our record is deceiving."**  
Athletic director Don Readance







# “Be the Best” taken to heart

With flagrant attempts to take the title of “best class” becoming more and more common, the general school spirit of Shaker has declined. Are Student Council and the administration inadvertently perpetuating the problem? See Cover Story, pages 8-9, for an in-depth analysis of the current status of school spirit in the high school.

COVER ART BY MIKE BELLAMY



Editors’ Note

# How to read Shakerite.com

Readers are moving from printed newspapers to online news sources, and The Shakerite has joined the crowd. However, we intend to use our news site, shakerite.com, to enrich rather than replace the print edition by providing frequent updates and extended coverage to readers. Throughout this issue, you will read invitations to visit the site for another perspective, a different story angle or additional photos. As part of our “How to read The Shakerite” series, we devote this month’s space to guiding students through our new website.

During the monthly Shakerite production cycle, editors will post timely content to the site.

Articles, images and infographics that appear in the print edition will mostly be those that don’t “expire” or lose public interest after a brief period. With the help of Journalism I students, the site will feature something new from every section of the print edition each week. As well as posting original and new articles and photographs on our website, we will also post the latest Shakerite publication and load the paper as a PDF document that can be “paged” through by mouse click. In the next months, you will also see features unique to the website, such as “Heard in the Halls This Week,” which is displayed on the home page.

By Graham Fine and Ilana Kramer

## Navigation Bar

This navigation bar helps visitors find their way around our website. Five of the tabs represent sections of the newspaper. Two others invite readers to submit a letter to the editor or subscribe. Section tabs send visitors to a page containing links to all stories published in that section in the print and online editions. Stories that appeared originally in the print edition are followed by a sentence indicating that a version of the article first appeared in print, the publication date and the page number. Clicking the “Submit a Letter to the Editor” tab on this bar brings you a form to complete and submit to The Shakerite email account. We always encourage anyone in the high school, and now, anyone on the planet, to submit letters to the editor to enrich the conversation in The Shakerite.

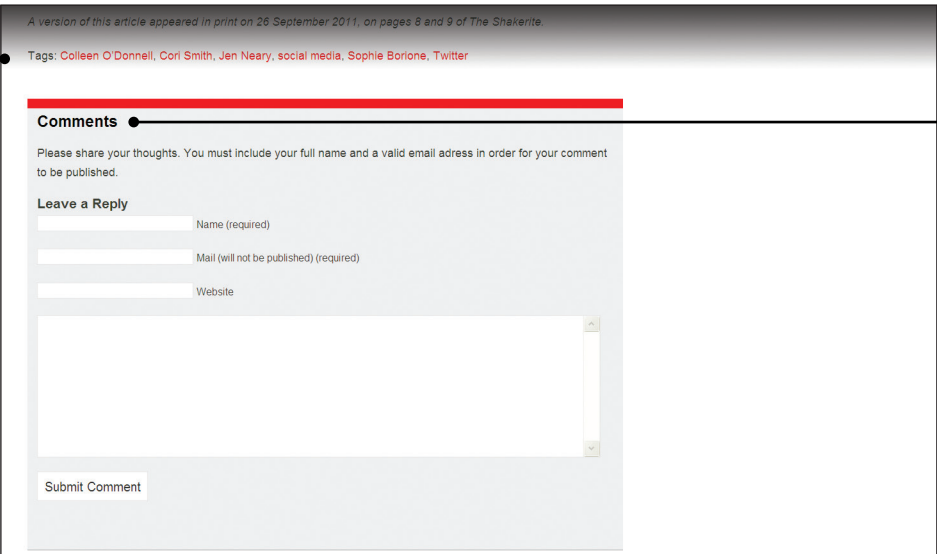


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A helpful feature of moving our newspaper online is linking stories that may interest readers. For example, if Principal Michael Griffith speaks in a story, his name will be “tagged” and appear at the bottom of the story as a hyperlink. By clicking on “Michael Griffith,” the reader is taken to a page that lists all other stories in which Griffith is featured, interviewed or mentioned. Each name, theme or major idea that appears in the article is tagged at the bottom of the page and so readers can more easily compare stories similar topics.



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## The Shakerite

21 November 2011 • Volume 82 • Issue 3

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